

I think it appropriate to pay tribute to an outstanding American who did so much for the legal profession and so much for charitable contributions with both the University of Pennsylvania and Temple University.

TRIBUTE TO AUGIE HIEBERT

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I have come to the Senate floor today to honor one of Alaska's most admired pioneers and a dear friend of mine and my whole family.

Alaskans will remember Augie Hiebert for his many achievements in the field of broadcasting and for opening the doors to modern communications for all Alaskans. In a State with few roads, where hundreds of miles of wilderness often separate towns and villages, Alaskans rely upon airwaves to connect them with people and events across our State, across the country, and around the globe. Augie was one of the first to bring the benefits of broadcast technology to our last frontier.

At an early age, Augie developed a fascination for electronics and radio which would lead him to a career in broadcasting. While growing up on an orchard in Washington State during the Great Depression, Augie built his own first radio. He earned his ham radio license at the age of 15. He was just 22 years old when he came to Fairbanks in 1939 to help a friend build KFAR Radio.

On the morning of December 7, 1941, Augie was listening to ham radio broadcasts at KFAR's transmitter when he heard of the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was one of the first in Alaska to hear the shocking news and immediately alerted the commander of Ladd Field right there in Fairbanks.

Having witnessed firsthand the impact broadcasting had on the lives of those who were living in Alaskan territory, Augie set out to bring the technology of television to what we call our great land. In 1953, Augie built Alaska's first television station, KTVA, bringing news, weather, sports, and entertainment to the people of Anchorage. Two years later, he broadcast the first television shows to Fairbanks when he built KTVF. Augie's TV stations brought history's defining events from around the globe into Alaska's living rooms. In 1969, Augie gave us the first live satellite broadcasts, and Alaskans from Fairbanks to Anchorage watched Neil Armstrong walk on the moon.

As Alaska's broadcast industry grew, so did Augie's family. He and his wife Pat raised four daughters.

During his long career in broadcasting, Augie served Alaska in many ways. He was the founder and president of the Alaska Broadcasters Association. When I was practicing law, I helped him form that association. Every year, Augie brought a group of Alaskan broadcasters to Washington for Alaska Day at the Federal Commu-

nications Commission, where he gave them a rare opportunity to speak on a one-to-one basis with commissioners about the unique challenges facing broadcasters in Alaska. But Augie's efforts to educate the FCC about Alaskan broadcasting didn't end there. He invited them, and the entire FCC at one time traveled to Alaska at his request.

In the early 1980s, Augie led the fight to preserve AM broadcast coverage in Alaska, which resulted in the creation of the class of the 1-N FCC category, a category just for our State of Alaska. Over the years, Augie introduced countless Alaskans to broadcasting and gave many their start in the industry. Though he officially retired in 1997, Augie remained committed to the future of broadcasting in Alaska, and until the day of his death, he was talking to me about the problem of white spaces in the current debate over new digital broadcasting.

He became a mentor to the students at Mirror Lake Middle School in Chugiak, AK, where he shared his enthusiasm for broadcasting and he helped students produce news programs for the school's closed-circuit television system, and they did that every morning before school started. He showed them how to prepare a morning show for their school. Augie brought leading professionals in the field of broadcasting to Mirror Lake to share their experiences and knowledge with these students. Today, the school operates a low-powered FM radio station which Augie helped build and license. It is the only class D low-powered radio license in the country issued to a school.

Rather than all of the firsts he achieved during his long career, Alaskans will remember Augie most as the man who made the Nation's largest State a little bit smaller. His efforts brought us closer to one another and closer to the rest of the world. Our thoughts and prayers are with Augie's daughters, their families, and all who loved him.

This man was a great American, a great Alaskan, and my great friend.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, today I would like to pay tribute to the U.S. Air Force as it commemorates its 60th anniversary, known as "Heritage to Horizons . . . Commemorating 60 Years of Air and Space Power." New Mexico has maintained a long and close relationship with the U.S. Air Force, and I am proud to congratulate the Air Force on its 60th anniversary.

New Mexico is home to Cannon, Holloman, and Kirtland Air Force Bases as well as the former Walker Air Force Base. We in New Mexico are honored and proud that so many Air Force officers and airmen, whose professionalism and dedication are unsurpassed, have called New Mexico home.

The fact that the Air Force is celebrating Air and Space Power is not lost on New Mexico, where work is done in both areas. Holloman will be a premier site of air power when the 49th Tactical Fighter Wing becomes home to the F-22A Raptor, the most advanced fighter in the world. Cannon is also undergoing changes and growth in the air power arena, as Air Force Special Operations Command stands up a new wing at Cannon on October 1. Kirtland continues to grow as home to much space work, including the Air Force Research Laboratory's Space Vehicle Directorate and the Operationally Responsive Space Office.

For the last 60 years, America has been protected by the greatest Air Force in the world. I salute the men and women of the Air Force and hope that on the Air Force's 60th anniversary, New Mexicans will take time to thank the officers and airmen who have served and honor the memory of those who have given their lives in our defense.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, GEN H.H. "Hap" Arnold, USAF, once said, "A modern, autonomous, and thoroughly trained Air Force in being at all times will not alone be sufficient, but without it there can be no national security." It is in the name of our national security that today I recognize the U.S. Air Force's 60th anniversary.

One hundred years ago, Henry H. "Hap" Arnold graduated from the U.S. Military Academy. That same year, in August 1907, the U.S. Army Signal Corps established an aeronautical division to oversee "military ballooning, air machines and all kindred subjects." Arnold went on to become the Chief of the Army Air Corps, and, upon the creation of the U.S. Air Force as a separate branch of the military in 1947, a year after General Arnold's retirement, Congress appointed him to the rank of five star general—the first and only in the history of the Air Force.

The U.S. Air Force was created by Congress to "be organized, trained, and equipped primarily for prompt and sustained offensive and defensive air operations." "[It] shall be responsible for the preparation of the air forces necessary for the effective prosecution of war except as otherwise assigned and, in accordance with integrated joint mobilization plans, for the expansion of the peacetime components of the Air Force to meet the needs of war." Today, on the anniversary of the National Security Act of 1947, we celebrate 60 years of an independent Air Force. This independence was necessary and critical and remains so in order that, in the recent words of MG Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., the United States has "one service that focuses on maximizing options for decision-makers by optimizing airpower."

The U.S. Air Force, comprised of close to 700,000 Active Duty, civilian, Air National Guard, and Air Force reservists, plays a vital and instrumental role in the ongoing fight against terrorism and other emerging threats on

multiple fronts, from flying combat missions and conducting manned and unmanned surveillance to logistical ground support. Thirty-five thousand Air Force personnel are currently deployed to 120 duty stations worldwide, keeping freedom alive and the forces of tyranny at bay. Whether it is monitoring satellites in orbit or the space shuttle, delivering precision-guided munitions to air and ground targets or patrolling the far reaches of cyberspace, the USAF maintains strategic and operational dominance in theater and around the globe. Fighters, bombers, missiles, and unmanned aircraft are the unparalleled tools of today's airmen, tools they use with unmatched skill and lethal precision in defense of our freedom and liberties.

On a daily basis for over 4 years now, dozens of close air support missions—troop support, infrastructure protection, reconstruction activities and operations to deter and disrupt terrorist activities—are conducted by coalition forces in Iraq. The U.S. Air Force is responsible for the majority of these.

Sixty years of Air Force excellence and superiority has been possible only because of those who have voluntarily dedicated their lives to the success of U.S. air power. With the esteemed heritage of "Hap" Arnold and other distinguished and outstanding leaders in their hearts, the men and women of the USAF and their families serve our Nation with distinction, integrity, and patriotism. They approach their mission in the same spirit with which they swore their oath of allegiance: with a grave sense of duty, honor and bravery.

Idaho has been home to Mountain Home Air Force Base for over 60 years now. Over the past half century, Mountain Home AFB has hosted many diverse missions of the Air Force including special and covert operations, combat and reconnaissance operations, ballistic missile defense, electronic combat, and fighter operations. It is one of the largest employers in the State of Idaho.

The Gunfighters, as Mountain Home AFB personnel are known, deploy to fight terror in an integrated fashion, from the maintenance and piloting of F-15 Eagles, F-15E Strike Eagles, and F-16 Fighting Falcons to complementary support missions such as intelligence and communications. In the air campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Gunfighters flew almost 1,000 individual sorties.

In addition to executing its military mission, the Air Force recognizes its environmental responsibility to the communities in which it operates and has worked diligently over the years to be a good steward of Federal land in southern Idaho. I have worked with leadership at the base on many land management issues during my service in Congress. Further, the Air Force continues to respect Native-American cultural sensitivities and practices and works hard to do its part in maintaining a respectful relationship for the

betterment of Shoshone-Paiute tribal interests as well as maintaining state of the art training for our airmen.

As a Nation, we are blessed to have such an outstanding, committed, and respectable military. The Air Force works intricately and effectively with the other military branches to skillfully execute the war on terror, specifically, but not limited to, military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Always innovative, the Air Force continues to look ahead, establishing itself as the dominant space defense force empowered and capable of facing new strategic global realities in an ever-changing global threat environment, ensuring its ability to respond to threats immediately and wherever they arise. Americans can be incredibly proud of and thankful for the sacrifice of their Air Force women and men worldwide. In the words of another famous former Chief of the Air Force, GEN Curtis LeMay, "If we maintain our faith in God, love of freedom, and superior global air power, the future looks good."

NEPAL'S FUTURE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, there are times in virtually every country's history when years of underdevelopment and conflict give rise to opportunities to change course. Such times are rare, and such opportunities are too often missed.

I think of our Civil War, which caused so much loss of life and devastation. It preserved the Union, and it led to the emancipation of some 3 million African slaves. Nothing can diminish those achievements or the sacrifice of those who gave their lives. But instead of providing the former slaves with the equal rights to which they were entitled, until passage of the Civil Rights Act a century later African Americans suffered from racially discriminatory laws that kept them in an inferior status. The country remained bitterly divided because of it.

Nepal today faces its own historic choice.

For more than a decade, Nepal has been plagued by an internal armed conflict in which savage brutality was inflicted on impoverished civilians by Maoist insurgents and the Royal Nepal Army. Over 13,000 people died, mostly noncombatants, and virtually no one has been held accountable for those crimes.

For more than two centuries, Nepal has been a monarchy whose Kings, with rare exception, denied the rights and ignored the needs of their people who remain among the world's poorest. In February 2005, King Gyanendra, a narcissistic, arrogant autocrat, seized absolute power, jailed his opponents, and muzzled the press, only to relent in April 2006 in the face of mounting international pressure and the protests of thousands of courageous Nepali citizens.

Nepal's previous experiment with multiparty democracy during the 1990s

had been disappointing. The leaders of the country's political parties distinguished themselves by amassing personal fortunes and doing little for the people.

But since the restoration of civilian government in April last year there has been impressive progress. A Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed, Maoist combatants have gone into cantonments, the army has been confined to barracks, and the Maoists, until today, were part of the interim Government. The King has been stripped of all political power, although the ultimate fate of the monarchy has yet to be decided. The word "royal" has been eliminated from Government institutions, including the army. Elections for a Constituent Assembly to be held in June were postponed, but they have been rescheduled for November 22. The assembly is to draft a new constitution.

Also during this period, Nepal's ethnic minorities, women, and other groups who have long been persecuted and denied a voice have demanded equal rights and representation. This poses both challenges and opportunities for the Government.

The international community, including the United States, has supported the peace process directly and through our financial contributions to the United Nations which has performed key monitoring functions. Recently, the United States provided \$3 million to purchase the ballots for the elections.

Much has transpired since April 2006, when I last spoke in this Chamber about political developments in Nepal. Today, just 65 days before Nepal's elections, I would like to address my brief remarks to the people of Nepal and to Nepal's political parties, including the Maoists.

On November 22, the people of Nepal will be presented with one of two options: They will either have a historic opportunity to create a legitimate, representative government which can only be achieved through a popular vote or they will be denied that opportunity. If the elections are held, Nepal will continue on a path that can bring its governmental institutions and its society into the modern age and begin to finally address the poverty and injustices that gave rise to the conflict. If they are denied, the Nepali people will likely see their country become more fragmented and ungovernable and more vulnerable to external influences over which they have little control.

Recent developments have been both encouraging and troubling. Perhaps that is to be expected in a country of multiple ethnic groups speaking some 93 languages that is struggling to transform itself.

The bombings in Kathmandu 3 weeks ago, other violent acts perpetrated by newly formed armed groups in the Terai and members of the Maoist young wing, the Young Communist League, and the Maoists decision to